

CHAPTER XI: Learning

WHAT IS LEARNING?

- ❖ A lasting change in behavior or mental processes that results from experience is defined as **learning**
 - learning not to respond to the repeated presentation of a stimulus is to create a habit, or **habituation**
 - a learned preference for stimuli to which we have been previously exposed is the **mere exposure effect**
 - forms of learning such as classical conditioning and operant conditioning, that can be described in terms of stimuli and responses is **behavioral learning**

THE ESSENTIALS OF CLASSICAL CONDITIONING

***Classical conditioning is a form of behavioral learning in which a previously **neutral stimulus**, or any stimulus that produces no conditioned response prior to learning, acquires the power to elicit the same innate reflex produced by another stimulus*

- ❖ **Acquisition** is the initial learning stage in classical conditioning, during which the conditioned response comes to be elicited by the conditioned stimulus
 - Conditioned stimulus (CS)
 - a previously neutral stimulus that comes to elicit the conditioned response; customarily in a conditioning experiment the neutral stimulus is called a CS
 - Unconditioned stimulus (UCS)
 - the stimulus that elicits an unconditioned response; no learning
 - Conditioned response (CR)
 - a response elicited by a previously neutral stimulus that has become associated with the unconditioned stimulus
 - Unconditioned response (UCR)
 - the response elicited by an unconditioned stimulus without prior learning
- ❖ **Extinction (in classical conditioning)** is the weakening of a conditioned response in the absence of an unconditioned stimulus
 - the reappearance of an extinguished conditioned response after a time delay is called **spontaneous recovery**
- ❖ **Stimulus generalization** is the extension of a learned response to stimuli that are similar to the conditioned stimulus
- ❖ **Stimulus discrimination** is a change in response to one stimulus but not to stimuli that are similar
- ❖ **Experimental neurosis** is a pattern of erratic behavior resulting from a demanding discrimination learning task, typically one that involves aversive stimuli
- ❖ **Taste-aversion learning** is how organisms learn what food to avoid through experience